

MARCH 2023

ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A CONGREGATION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AMERICA

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ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

111 Peter Road, Southbury CT 06488

www.stjamesct.org

[@stjamesctlutheran](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesctlutheran)

203.264.6446

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

Our building is locked at all times for security.

Rev. Abigail Lilja Johnson, Pastor

(she/her/hers)

pastor@stjamesct.org

203-450-6454 (call or text)

CHURCH COUNCIL

Kathy Haddy	<i>President</i>
Linda Bedard	<i>Vice President</i>
Donna Peterson	<i>Secretary</i>
Jan Carnaroli	<i>Worship</i>
Liz Skinski	<i>Faith Formation</i>
Lucia Dressel	<i>Fellowship & Comm.</i>
Diane Mladjen	<i>Preschool</i>
Lynn Morrison	<i>Outreach & Evang.</i>
Tony Salvatore	<i>Finance & Properties</i>
Emilie Ulc	<i>Youth Rep.</i>
Rev. Abigail Johnson	

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Genie Bisch	<i>Parish Admin. & Preschool Admin. Assistant</i>
Abigail Manville	<i>Media & Communications</i>
Leslie Broch	<i>Director, St. James Preschool</i>
Diane Peterson	<i>Organist</i>
Curt Haedke	<i>Financial Secretary</i>
Neil Johnson	<i>Treasurer</i>
Ellen Hubina	<i>Asst. Treasurer</i>

Please contact the office **before** dropping by should you require assistance.
If you desire use of the office space, please schedule time **outside** the
Parish Administrator's working hours. Thank you!

March 2023

Regular calendar updates on our website
<https://stjamesct.org/calendar/>

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 6-8pm Soup Supper 7pm Worship @ St. James	2 10:45am Worship @ The Lutheran Home	3	4
5 3pm CT Master Chorale Concert	6 2:30pm Worship & Music	7 7:15pm YAFM	8 6-8pm Lent on the Road 7:30pm Preschool Board	9	10	11 9:30am Men's Group 11:30am Rice Shelf
12 <i>Daylight savings</i>	13	14 1pm Ladies' Fellowship	15 <i>Epistle Contributions</i> 6-8pm Lent on the Road	16 7pm Finance & Properties	17 	18
19 11:30am Outreach Team	20	21 1pm Evangelism 4pm Fellowship	22 6-8pm Lent on the Road	23 7pm VBS 7pm Council	24	25
26 9am New Member Info Session 	27	28	29 6-8pm Lent on the Road	30	31	

WEEKLY EVENTS

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
9:00am Adult Forum 10:15am Worship w/ Sunday School	8:00pm AA	9am-12pm Parish Admin. 11:00am Staff Meeting	12:30pm Meditation Call 1:30-3:30pm Fika w/ Pastor 8:00pm AA	9am-12pm Parish Admin.	2:30-5pm Parish Admin. <i>Pastor Sabbath</i>	<i>Pastor Sabbath</i>

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

FIKA
with PASTOR

Wednesdays
1:30 - 3:30 PM
at Starbucks,
Southbury

All are welcome to this daily Swedish tradition of a coffee break with friends



MEET PASTOR ABBY

Whether in celebration, grief, doubt, or curiosity of faith, she is happy to meet with you at a time and place that suits you well.

Observes Sabbath Fridays & Saturdays. Please call for pastoral emergencies.

REPORTS & NEWS

WORD & SACRAMENTS

From February

No baptisms, funerals, or weddings; Lutheran Home worship service

Crafting a "Creative Worship" for each liturgical season

PASTORAL CARE & COUNSEL

1st Quarter Focus:

Church Membership

Ongoing spiritual guidance & support for individuals, families, ministry teams, & community

WIDER CHURCH & PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Organizer for "Lent on the Road" with Southbury/Woodbury churches

Artist for Mustard Seed Ministries, faith ed. materials for kids

CONTINUING EDUCATION

February - May

"Community Organizing for Climate Justice" online course,

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS!

Interested in joining the church? Come & learn!

Membership Info
Breakfast
Sun. March 26, 9am

Those who wish to join will be affirmed by a Council vote and welcomed with a blessing on April 30 during Good Shepherd Sunday. Offered again in the fall.



A WORD FROM PASTOR

Dear beloved community,

Over January, I traveled to Guatemala to visit our outreach partner Hope Academy; to strengthen our relationships, deliver your gifts of books and supplies, and share my own in the form of murals. I am so grateful for many opportunities to travel in service over the years, though each experience has humbled and educated me in both beautiful and uncomfortable ways.

"Mission Trip" has become a bit of a sticky phrase, as it implies an imbalanced agenda and tactic. Often, it favors the traveler and their experience, at the expense of the host's dignity or lasting benefit. Sometimes it is the flip; travelers used as mere tools in an effort to provide a quick fix. In either situation, the exchange is not mutual and therefore, an authentic relationship struggles to form.

But there are different ways that don't split people into teams of "givers" and "receivers." Founder and director of Hope Academy, Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, calls this **Bold Humility**. In this approach, there is authentic meeting of gifts to needs; a sharing and connecting that respects the Belovedness of all. There is faithful reflection and cultural education before and after, fostering consciousness of the Spirit and global community.

As people of God, we are called to love and serve our neighbor; across our street and across our borders. While doing so, we must consistently pray, reflect, learn from and listen to our partners so that we mutually support in justice, equity and mercy. The pervasiveness of power dynamics and broken systems in our world require us to be more than blind givers or receivers but thoughtful, intentional relationship builders who act in bold humility. Whether you are at home in CT or flying to Central America, you have the potential to make a positive difference on this world and the lives of your neighbor each day. God has equipped you with a critical mind, receptive ears, an expansive heart, and gifts to share.

Peace, Pastor Abby Johnson



LENT

Feb. 22nd - April 1st

Into The Wilderness

Lent is the season of penitence and reconciliation. For 40-days, Jesus retreated to the wilderness for solitude with God and so we too journey in thoughtful reflection for 40-days (excluding Sundays), confessing our sins and shortcomings, facing the brokenness of our world, and recommitting to live more faithfully.

Liturgical Color:
Purple

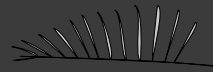
Season's Guest:
Rev. Dewey Strohmeyer
March 12

Special Observances:
Ash Wednesday
Feb. 22

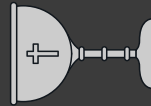
HOLY WEEK

April 2nd - April 9th

Come to the Cross



Palm Sunday
Pageant
10:15am



Maundy
Thursday
Communion
7:00pm



Good Friday
Tenebrae
7:00pm



Holy Saturday
Meditation
9:00am



Easter Sunday
7:00am *outside*
& 10:15am
Communion

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Join our planning meeting 1st Tuesdays @ 2:30PM



Worshipping with Art

Early in February, members and friends took home one small piece of a mystery picture to transfer onto a larger art tile in their own creative style. On Transfiguration Sunday, we celebrated seeing God in new ways through the transformation of Christ. That morning, all the tiles came back together in worship, revealing a beautiful St. James masterpiece. Likewise, when each of our unique perspectives come together, a more beautiful and complete picture of God is shared with the world.

Tradition meets Creativity

In our worship, we strive to embrace this blend; to root us in the community of faith throughout time while also affirming that God is continually revealed in new ways as our world changes, too!





SOUTHBURY & WOODBURY

LENT ON THE ROAD

March 1

St. James Lutheran Church
111 Peter Rd., Southbury
Rev. Abigail Johnson

March 8

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
294 Main St. South, Woodbury
Rev. Tuesday Rupp

March 15

United Methodist Church
4 Church St., Woodbury
Rev. J. Michael Cobb

March 22

Southbury United Church of Christ
283 Main St N, Southbury
Rev. Shawn Garan and
Rev. Donna Cassity, of SBCC

March 29

Church of The Epiphany (Episcopal)
262 Main St. North, Southbury
Rev. Marston Price

Wednesdays

6:00 PM Simple Supper

7:00 PM Worship



During this Lenten season, let us journey together as people of the Christian faith from many traditions!

You are invited to gather for a very simple supper and worship service each Wednesday evening at a different church in our community. Come fellowship with new neighbors around the table, experience new sacred spaces, and worship the same God in new or different ways. All people of any faith or tradition is welcome.

love

SERVING IN WORSHIP

LITURGY MEANS "THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE" IN GREEK

March 5

Preaching: Rev. Abigail Johnson

Altar Guild: Judy Katzmark

Ushers: Bob Morrison, Judy Lee

Lector: Jan Salvatore

Asst. Minister: Karen Lampiasi

Cantor: Curt Haedke

Counters: Donna Peterson,
Jacque Matthew

Sunday School: Lynn Morrison,
Mary Ewert

March 12

Preaching: Rev. Dewey Strohmeier

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone

Ushers: Gary Kline, Tony Salvatore

Lector: Emilie Ulc

Asst. Minister: Liz Skinski

Cantor: Lucia Dressel

Counters: Rich Larson, Gary Kline

Sunday School: Kat Hubina, Donna
Peterson

March 19

Preaching: Rev. Abigail Johnson

Altar Guild: Lynn Morrison

Ushers: Jacque Matthew, Judy
Katzmark

Lector: Kathy Haddy

Asst. Minister: Lynn Morrison

Cantor: Karen Lampiasi

Counters: Steven Ulc, Catherine Ulc

Sunday School: Chris Salvatore,
Kathy Haddy

March 26

Preaching: Rev. Abigail Johnson

Altar Guild: Judy Lee

Ushers: Bob Morrison, Judy
Katzmark

Lector: Abby Lyons

Asst. Minister: Jan Salvatore

Cantor: Neil Johnson

Counters: Barbara Manville, Bob
Morrison

Sunday School: Liz Skinski, Linda
Bedard

CONTACT:

Cantors: Diane Peterson

Assistant Ministers: Liz Skinski

Sunday School: Lauren Lyons

Ushers: Jacque Matthew

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone

Lectors: Judy Katzmark

Counters: Curt Haedke

Coffee Hour: Lynn Morrison



Faith Formation

Bible Study

Midweek study on pause through March for lenten worship gatherings (Typically Wednesdays @ 7:30 - 8:30 PM, on Zoom)

A casual conversation on Sunday's assigned readings and time for prayer. Come as you are, no preparation needed.

Midweek Meditation

Wednesdays @ 12:30 PM, Phone call

Original 2-minute guided meditations recorded by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website homepage or listen on the podcast

Adult Forum

Sundays @ 9:00 - 10:00 AM, in Prayer Chapel

Studies of books, scripture, or social issues where faith and the world meet.

This Season of Lent...

Bible Study



Podcast: A Steadfast Branch

A weekly podcast for all ages, listen for free online or on Spotify. Faith-formation offerings such as sermons, devotionals, kids chats, blessings, meditations, and interviews with the wider church community





FAITH FORMATION... FOR KIDS!

Youth & Family Ministry Team
1st Tuesdays, 7:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays 10:30am
Grades PreK-5

Dismissed mid-worship for a brief lesson and activity in art, music, storytelling, games, and more. Lead by rotating teachers.

CONFIRMATION

TBD
Grades 6-8

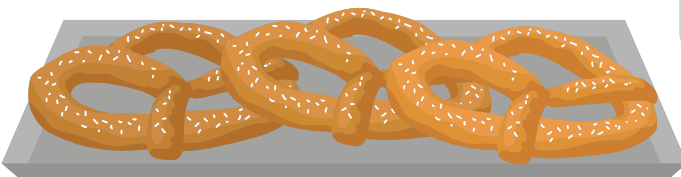
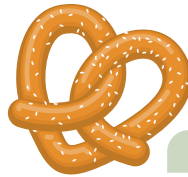
A deeper study in Lutheran tradition and Christian faith in affirmation of baptism. If you're interested, see teacher Lynn Morrison to enroll.

YOUTH GROUP

2nd Sunday
monthly
4:00pm @
rotating churches
Grades 6-12

March 12
Good Shepherd
Lutheran Church,
in Monroe CT

Pretzel Making
at Saint James
@ 9am



ST JAMES YOUTH AND FAMILIES

yafm@stjamesct.org

*"Creating an environment where
open minds and open hearts can
see, hear, and feel the love of God."*

A small but mighty group is working hard to continue youth and family programming this year. Thanks to all who are helping with teaching Sunday school during services. Some upcoming events to get on your calendar include:

March 26th - Pretzel making at Saint James, 9am

ALL are welcome to join!!!! If you have interest in helping with any of the YAFM programming please contact Lauren Lyons lyonsden1133@yahoo.com or Liz Skinski liz.skinski@earthlink.net.

Meetings are held every other month (March 7 and May 2nd at 7:15pm).

VBS PLANNING

An introductory planning group met on January 26 to brainstorm and begin planning for vacation bible school 2023! VBS is currently being planned for July 17th-21st - if you couldn't make the meeting, but would like to be involved please let us know! It takes a village and we will need teachers, behind the scenes help, music, crafts, science, games, etc. Please tell us where you would best like your gifts to be used! You do not have to commit for all of VBS if part works better - just let us know. Contact Lauren Lyons 203-982-8415 lyonsden1133@yahoo.com or yafm@stjamesct.org. VBS planning meetings will be held at church the 4th Thursday of each month at 7pm - all are welcome!

Lead contacts for VBS include:
Teachers - Lynn Morrison and Meghan Colasanto
Program - Lauren Lyons and Megan Buchanan
Registration - Abigail Manville
Property - Jacques Matthews
Finances - Ellen Hubina
Policy and Procedures - Ellen Hubina and Jan Carnaroli

Look for a volunteer registration email to be coming out soon!!!





Rev. T. A. Gustafson Educational Aid Fund

The Rev. T. A. Gustafson Educational Aid Fund supports active confirmed members of St. James to pursue higher education. Awards are based on future promise, participation in St. James and financial need. Application forms are available for pickup at church or online <https://stjamesct.org/outreach-and-ministries/parish-life/gustafson-fund/> and must be submitted by March 15th

Fellowship Team

Meets 3rd Tuesday @ 4PM via Zoom, See Barbara Manville

Coffee Hour

Sundays @ 11:30am in Entrance Hall

Many thanks to the Colasantos Family, Jenny Beaudean-White and Gary Kline for hosting Coffee Hour in February. If interested, please sign up in the gathering area

Evangelism

Meets 3rd Tuesday @ 1pm in the small chapel

We are ALWAYS looking for folks who would like to join our Evangelism Team - this is a beautiful and wonderful opportunity to engage with others focused on spreading the Good News of Christ, and our only and true Salvation. We meet each month, 3rd Tuesday, 1 pm. Contact Lynn Morrison (203-426-7749, edgelake@aol.com) for an update of planned activities/events!

*Making Valentine's
Day cards for the
Lutheran Home
residents*



ST JAMES PRESCHOOL

203-264-6448

stjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com

Leslie Broch, Director



While we have not really had snow for the children to play in this winter, we have taken advantage of the warmer weather and have spent extended time enjoying being outside - playing, working and even having a few picnics! As we head into March, we are looking forward to exploring the change of seasons and creative color-mixing activities!



**In Honor of
Women's
History
Month...**



STORYTIME

WITH PASTOR ABBY

"Shark Lady"
by Jess Keating &
illustrated by Marta
Alvares Miguens



Preschool Registration Now Open for 2023-2024!

~Miss the Preschool Open House?

~Know someone with a young child?

Personal tours can be scheduled by calling or emailing the preschool



Ulla McGee Scholarship Fund

We wanted to express our gratitude to those who have supported the preschool scholarship fund in the past. We had greater than average need for financial assistance this year and your contributions offered several families the opportunity to send their children to our program.

If you would like to help us build up the fund for next year, keep an eye out for upcoming fundraisers:

- Cards for a Cause
 - Newbury Place gift certificate raffle
 - Dining in/out at DiPalmas
 - kids Tae Kwon Do
 - Dining in/out at Julio's
- ...or direct donation through the church!

Thank you for supporting the community!



The pancake supper was a hit!
Thank you to everyone. We raised
\$213 for Hope Academy

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

March 19th @ 11:30AM
Zoom and Fellowship Hall

This is an incredibly generous congregation with a lot of heart for outreach locally and globally. We would like to resurrect a group to get together semi-annually to coordinate all the outreach efforts and ensure smooth communication as well as assist with ensuring financial disbursements are timely.

We plan to host a meeting of anyone with a heart or hands for outreach on March 19th at 11:30am after worship but also available via zoom. If you help with an outreach project but can not attend, please get an update to Lauren Lyons so it can be included.
203-982-8415 lyonsden1133@yahoo.com

Lutheran World Relief Health Care Kits

Ladies' Fellowship is preparing to put together 25 kits for March. This preparation included reviewing our current supply of items accumulated for this purpose. We find ourselves short of the following: Towels – size 20X40 or 27X52, Combs (no rat tails, if possible), and Nail Clippers. A basket will be placed in the Narthex for those who would like to assist us in this project by donating items.

Youth and Families College Support Boxes

The Youth and Family Ministries team will be collecting items to send in college support boxes to show our love, support and encouragement to our young people in March. If you would like to contribute items to the boxes (small snacks, gum, small toiletries, notes, pick-me-ups etc) there will be a box in the gathering area.

We will be assembling 9 boxes early in March.

Guatemala 2024 2024 Mission Trip

St. James is traveling with "bold humility" to visit Hope Academy, our outreach partner in Guatemala next winter. If you are interested in participating and want more information, contact Jenifer Beaudean, jenny@foureyedfish.com

Don't forget the rice shelf!

The food bank often struggles during the cold winter months, please be sure to continue to provide donations of boxed rice so we can keep the shelf well stocked. Many thanks to the following families for signing up to help with getting our rice donations to the Southbury Food Bank (88 Main Street South, in the same complex as the Rathskeller Restaurant). There are a few open months – contact Lauren Lyons if you are able to help. You can opt to stock the shelf or they will stock it for you!

Food Bank Stocking
Hours: 2nd Saturday of
month from 11:15-12:30
pm. Call (203)721-0377 to
make other
arrangements.

March – Cub Scouts
April – Men's Fellowship
May – Colasanto Family
June –
July –

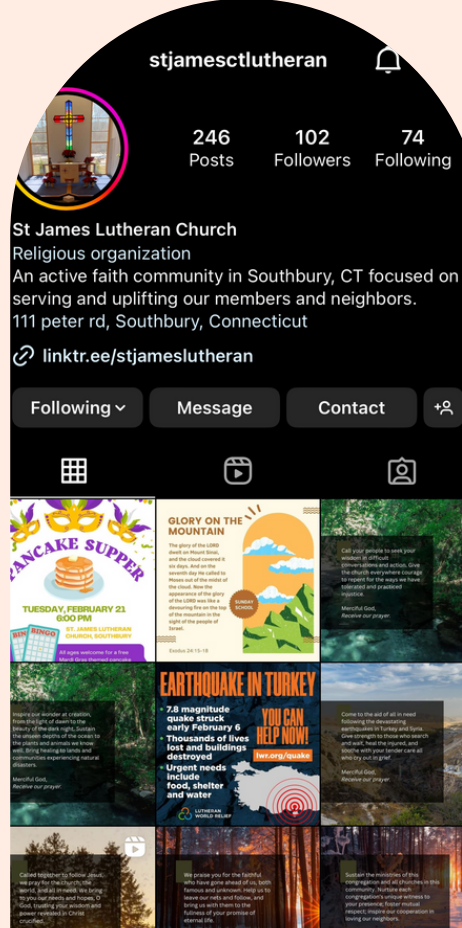
Digital Evangelism

How do we engage people in our digital age? Jesus met and ministered to people where they were - in homes, boats, fields, and even at parties. While houses of worship provide a place to gather together, we must also minister and reach out to people *where they are every day*. In this day and age, that means connecting with them in the digital world.

St James has worked hard to improve our digital outreach and evangelism by crafting recorded services, podcasts, radio broadcasts, online blog posts, and social media (all gathered on our "faith online" page). The most recent addition is the inclusion of a "Stewardship Story", which highlights snapshots of a member's stewardship journey. You can read excerpts of this article in the monthly epistle and the full article online on stjamesct.org.

Have content ideas for social media? A blog topic you've always wanted to read? Interested in sharing your stewardship journey? Contact Abigail

Media and Communications



Abigail's Recent Classes & Reading

Getting Curious: Entering and Serving in a Small Town or Rural Context (Upcoming, March 4)
Faith+Lead @ Luther Seminary

How to Be Found: Online Visibility for Churches
Faith+Lead @ Luther Seminary

 [@stjamesctlutheran](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesctlutheran)

 [@stjamesctlutheran](https://www.facebook.com/stjamesctlutheran)

 www.stjamesct.org

 manville.abigail@gmail.com

STEWARDSHIP

"At birth, our parents gave us a name and, through that name, an identity." - Lynn Morrison

At birth, our parents gave us a name and, through that name, an identity. Wherever we are or go, we will respond to that name. In a similar way, we gained another identity when we were born as God's children in Holy Baptism. God has created and recreated us so that we belong to Him. Through His body and blood in Holy Communion, He forgives our sins and furthers His claim on us as His own. We have one identity through our parents, but a much more important one through our Lord. Because we belong to Him, we have another identity – that of steward. As God's stewards, we see life as a gift and understand that all we have is on loan to us, and we willingly and responsibly manage what God has entrusted to us. When we acknowledge His ownership, we understand our identity as unique individuals, as children of God, and as His chosen stewards.



"The church is not a building, it is a place of refuge." - Bob Morrison

Q: What is one moment when the church was a place of refuge for you?

For me, the church (SJLC) is not a building, it is a place of refuge. In 2018 the front half of our cottage was destroyed. God's hands placed us in our car in Jersey (coming home from the dentist!) when the destruction occurred.

Q: What role has the church played in your life?

The role the Church (faith) has played in my life is the role my wife, Lynn has played in bringing me back to church after some 40 years! It must have been God's intention for that to happen, and it allows me to contribute to the church's and the community's wellbeing.

Q: Is there an outreach project you feel passionately about?

The Lutheran Church, especially St. James, has faithful followers that have the spirit to volunteer to do God's work (our hands!) to contribute ecumenically to the local population via many avenues. This includes VBS, the Southbury Food Bank, The Lutheran Home, the annual Home Front improvements day, etc.

A church outreach project I feel passionately about is the **Heifer International Project**- "Ending Hunger and Poverty while caring for the Earth"

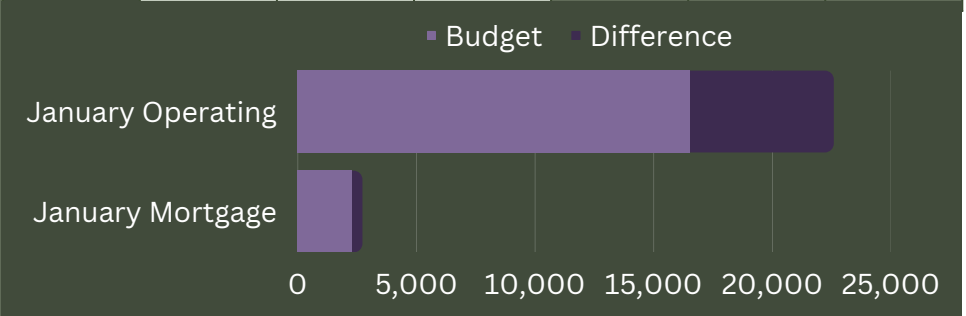
Parish Support

Financial Team & Property Team meets together 3rd Thursday @ 7PM

Financial Report As of Jan 31, 2023

We could say that a contented person sees his cup half-full rather than half-empty. Do your actions indicate that you are content? The Apostle Paul had learned the secret of contentment, for he realized that, in every circumstance, he was in his Father's hands. He had been at the point of death several times. He had suffered much, yet he said, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstance" (Philippians 4:11). He found that contentment involves learning to love God and to trust in His will regardless of the circumstances in which he found himself. When we abide in Christ through Word and Sacrament, we find contentment. Realizing and recognizing what we have (the presence of God), rather than lamenting what we lack (nothing if we have Christ), brings us contentment.

Month	Operating Income			Mortgage Income		
	Budget	Actual	Diff	Budget	Actual	Diff
January	16,500	10,427	(6,073)	2,266.25	1,825.00	(441.25)



Current Fund Amounts



\$21,138.03
Bell Tower



\$1,897.00
Organ



\$805.00
Organ & Music



\$0
Landscaping

In Our Prayers

Jordyn Neeb	Becky Lilja	Alejandro Alvarado
Rich Neeb	Jean Kolodziej	John Raslear
Nicole Keller	Tim Peterson	Chris Salvatore
Brian Mons	Diana Larson	Douglas Calderone
Janet Benzell	Paul Meberg	Thomas Senerchia
Caroline Kaiger	Ed Mueller	Sonja White
Mike Kolodziej		

Please also keep Tim Peterson and all those who serve in the military, in your prayers.

We also give thanks for all the saints, especially Christine Granskog, Julie Johnson, Grace Warren, LaRayne Rogers, Eleanor Sydlo, Ezekiel Kelly, Joan Supp, Judy Staskiewicz, Steve Mattson, Andrew Gardner, Dennis Tino, Norma Jean Tino, Lucille Chayt, and Lou Miller

Prayer List Updates:

The prayer list is edited by request and the full list was reset following All Saints Sunday. To add to the prayer list or request a name remain on the list, please see Pastor Abby or Liz Skinski.

Prayer alerts are sent via email by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website. If you wish to receive alerts by phone call or text, please see Karen Lampiasi to be added to the list.

Please join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at 10:15 am for worship at 111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT. Masks are optional; we ask all to review CDC and CT guidelines to make appropriate choices for your household.